

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Orkney Islands Council Offices, Kirkwall on Friday 15 September 2017 at 9.00am.

PRESENT
 Cllr Allan Henderson, The Highland Council Member (Chair)
 Cllr John Cowe, Moray Council Member (Vice Chair)
 Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Member
 Cllr Graham Sinclair, Orkney Islands Council Member
 Mr Wilson Metcalfe, Non-Councilor Member
 Prof David Gray, Non Councilor Member
 Mr Okain McLennan, Non-Councilor Member

IN ATTENDANCE
 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director
 Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager
 Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary
 Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer
 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager
 Mr Gavin Barr, Orkney Islands Council
 Mrs. Nicola Moss, Moray Council
 Mr Brian Archibald, Orkney Islands Council
 Ms Laura Cromarty, Orkney Islands Council
 Mr Iain Mackinnon, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
 Mr Fraser Grieve, SCDI
 Cllr Andrew Drever, Orkney Islands Council
 Mr Andrew Willis, Urban Foresight
 Mr Lindsay Robertson, Grant Thornton

APOLOGIES
 Cllr Roderick McCuish, Argyll and Bute Council
 Mrs Pip Farman, NHS Highland
 Mr Robin Clarke, HIE

MINUTES

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Minute of Meeting of 23 June 2017 | 1 | The Minute of Meeting of 23 June 2017 was approved with the amendments detailed at the Meeting. |
| Matters Arising | 2 | Mr Ranald Robertson provided an update on actions following the previous meeting. Mr Robertson indicated that the Skye Airport Working Group had developed a preferred option within the latest Strategic Business Case and how this could be taken forward on a reduced cost infrastructure basis in the short to medium term. It is intended that officers engage with Scottish Ministers, Transport Scotland and other key agencies. Mr Robertson provided an update in respect of the extension of student eligibility within the Air Discount Scheme and indicated that appointments had been made to the posts of Car Club Development Officer and Smart Mobility Project Officer. |

It was agreed to note the update.

FINANCE

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 2016/17 Audited Accounts | 3 | Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer, presented the 2016/17 Audited Accounts detailing the performance of the Partnership and providing narrative on the financial outlook for 2017/18 and beyond. |
|--------------------------|---|---|

It was agreed to approve The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership Annual Audited Accounts 2016/17.

2016/17 Annual Audit Report 4 Mr Lindsay Robertson, Grant Thornton Auditors, submitted a Report detailing the draft External Audit Annual Report to Members and Controller of Audit – 2016/17 Financial Year. Mr Robertson indicated that an unqualified opinion would be issued, highlighted the identified audit risks and provided an update on prior year recommendations. Mr Robertson thanked Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer, for his assistance during the audit. The Chair thanked Mr Robertson and his team for their work.

It was agreed to note the 2016/17 Annual Audit Report and approve the Letter of Representation detailed at Appendix 4 of the Report.

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 1 April 2016 to 31 August 2017 5 Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer, submitted a Report detailing the revenue monitoring position for the period to 31 August 2017 and the projected year end position. The Report stated the annual budget had been approved at the Board Meeting of 3 February 2016 and had subsequently been amended for the inclusion of the 2016/17 underspend of £6,610 and the Inverness Station project grant as part of the Community Links Project. The budget also included a Carplus grant to support the development of existing and new car clubs within the HITRANS area. The Report detailed that there were no major issues or variances to highlight and in light of the 2016/17 outturn position, the Partnership Director and Partnership Treasurer had reviewed the budget and no adjustments were required to the previously agreed budget.

It was agreed to approve the revenue monitoring position for the period to 31 August 2017.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research and Strategy Development Programme 2017/18 6 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report which provided an update on progress on delivering the Research and Strategy Development Programme and sought approval of amendments to the Programme to reflect commitments made and changing priorities and funding opportunities identified since approval of the 2017/18 Business Plan. The Report summarised the key Programme changes as follows:

- Introduce a new item with a budget of £35,000 to reflect HITRANS budget contribution towards the G-PaTRA and Green Bus Fund projects which would deliver additional budget to HITRANS estimated as £230,00 in 2017/18.
- Reduce the budget for External Funding EU / Other to £35,000 reflecting introduction of the separate reporting for G-PaTRA/ GBF and the likely budget draw down from Horizon 2020 INCLUSION Project in 2017/18.
- Include specific reference to Evanton Station Business Care and East/ South Inverness Station study within rail projects.

It was agreed:

- (1) **to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2017/18 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report; and**
- (2) **that the Partnership Director would submit a Report to the next Meeting detailing proposals for HITRANS to assist Local Authorities to develop the connectivity strand within the Islands deal.**

RTS Refresh
Update

- 7 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report which provided an update on Regional Transport Strategy Refresh and sought approval for proposed amendments to the draft Strategy following public consultation so that a final version of the Strategy, Delivery Plan and Monitoring Plan could be submitted to the Scottish Government Ministers. The Report stated that the updated Strategy set out the key projects and initiatives that had been identified to support the overarching vision of the Strategy which was to deliver better connectivity across the region that enabled sustainable economic growth and helped communities actively participate in economic and social activities.

The Report further stated that a total of 105 responses had been received during the consultation period. A copy of the Consultation Report was detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report. The Report listed the key proposed changes to the Strategy in response to the consultation. The proposed revised Monitoring Plan was detailed in Appendix 2 to the Report and the main changes set out in the proposed Monitoring Plan were detailed within the Report.

It was agreed to approve:

- (1) that the proposed amendments, set out in Appendix 1 of the Report, are made to the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy prior to submitting the Strategy and associated Delivery Plan to Scottish Ministers for approval:**
- (2) the proposed changes to the Monitoring Plan for the updated Regional Transport Strategy; and**
- (3) that the Partnership Director and HITRANS Chair be authorised to approve any final changes to the document in advance of submitting the Strategy and supporting documents to Ministers.**

Moray Firth Arc
Station
Development
Update

- 8 Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report which provided an update on current and potential station developments on the Moray Firth Arc. The Report gave information detailing the current and potential station developments in the following areas:

- Elgin
- Forres
- Nairn
- Inverness Airport Dalcross
- Inverness Rail East (IRE)
- Inverness Station
- Evanton
- Invergordon

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report; and**
- (2) approve the Inverness Rail East-Study Brief detailed at Appendix 1 of the Report to be funded from the Research and Strategy Development Programme.**

Value of Transport 9 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report which provided information on the Executive Summary of the desk based Study commissioned by HITRANS into The Value of Transport. The Report sought to identify the wider socio-economic value of the transport network and services at both a local and inter-regional level. The Report gave information on the key themes of Economic Growth, Delivery of Health Services, Delivery of Education Services, Social Cohesion and Economic Appraisal. The Report provided an invaluable evidence base to support the investment and prioritisation of transport infrastructure and services made by HITRANS and partners at a local, regional and national level. The Report highlighted that it also demonstrated how transport services facilitated the delivery of health and educational services, thereby making the delivery of those services more cost efficient.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report and provide comment on its findings;**
- (2) that HITRANS Officers share a copy of the Report with Community Planning Partners and Transport Scotland to support the evidence place in their development of the National Transport Strategy;**
- (3) to make representations to Scottish Ministers to reiterate the importance of NHS Scotland engaging with Regional Transport Partnerships and Local Authorities in relation to transport matters; and**
- (4) that Partnership Advisors would consider how best to take forward the Study with Scottish Government, Transport Scotland and partner organisations.**

Islands Air Links Competitive Commercial Operations 10 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report which provided an update on the introduction of competitive commercial air services on routes to Kirkwall, Stornoway and Sumburgh that commenced on Friday 1 September 2017. The Report stated that Flybe and Loganair announced in November 2016 that their franchise agreement would terminate on 31 August 2017. Loganair subsequently announced their intention to continue operation of all existing services and would look to introduce schedule enhancements. In June 2017 Flybe announced a Heads of Terms with Eastern Airways to establish a new alliance to operate routes to Sumburgh, Kirkwall and Stornoway. The Report provided details of the scheduled services across the Highland and Islands network.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Active Travel Update 11 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, presented a Report providing an update on the active travel work supported by HITRANS. The Report stated that HITRANS had been successful in receiving £75,000 funding towards feasibility, community consultation and outline design for active travel routes linking into the three pedestrian entrances to Inverness Railway Station. An overview of the 2017/18 Projects within the HITRANS area was provided in the Report along with an overview of area wide spend from 2014 onwards.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) that the Partnership Director would circulate a Briefing Document on Active Travel to Local Authority Board Members and Advisors prior to the CoSLA Convention.**

Electrical Vehicle Strategy 12 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report providing an update on the development of HITRANS Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan. The Report stated that Urban Foresight had been appointed as consultants to support the development of the Strategy and Action Plan. The Report highlighted key priorities and evidenced based policies that were anticipated to be established while developing the Strategy. Mr Andrew Willis, Head of UK Projects, Urban Foresight gave a presentation on the development of an Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan for the HITRANS area. Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions of Mr Willis.

It was agreed to note the Report.

CONSULTATION

Improving Parking in Scotland Consultation 13 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report concerning the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government consultation on improving parking in Scotland. The Report stated that the consultation paper set out proposed arrangements aimed to deliver a consistent approach to managing parking in Scotland. The HITRANS response to the consultation was detailed in the Appendix to the Report and reflected many of the issues captured in the process of updating the Regional Transport Strategy

It was agreed to note the Report.

- Consultation Arrangements for Current CHFS Contract (post October 2016)
- 14 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report setting out the proposed terms of reference and structures for Ferry Stakeholder Engagement processes developed by HITRANS officers through discussion with Calmac Ferries Limited. The Report stated that an earlier version of the terms of reference had received broad support and endorsement at the Ferry Users Group meeting in Spring 2017. The proposed terms of reference of the Regional Ferry Stakeholder Groups was provided at Appendix A to the Report and highlighted that the most significant changes were:
- A proposal that the Ferry Users Group would be rebranded to Ferry Stakeholder Group (FSG) to clarify their role and membership and underline the role of the Ferry Committee tier as the first point of engagement ferry users would have with their local service.
 - A proposal that an independent Chair be appointed who has responsibility for chairing each of the four FSG Meetings. This was proposed to help provide consistency across the FSG Groups, and to integrate with the Communities Boards structure that Calmac Ferries Limited were separately establishing as a Contractual Commitment.
 - That every community within the CHFS network would be encouraged to identify a form of Ferry Committee. This function might formally rest with an existing organisation such as a community council but there would be a need to be a formal identification of their role in the ferry consultation process for an island area.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report; and**
- (2) approve the arrangements set out in Appendix A to the Report.**

- UK Aviation Strategy – Call for Evidence
- 15 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report detailing HITRANS draft submission in response to the Department for Transport's Call for Evidence to support the development of a new aviation strategy for the UK. The Report stated the Department for Transport had prepared a consultation paper entitled "Beyond the Horizon – The Future of UK Aviation" and published a Call for Evidence to begin the consultation process seeking views from across industry, businesses, consumers environmental groups and anyone with an interest in aviation. The consultation paper set out the objectives for the new Aviation Strategy and invited feedback on proposed key strategy principles.

It was agreed to authorise the Partnership Director and HITRANS Chair to develop a response on behalf of HITRANS in collaboration with partner Local Authorities in advance of the 13 October 2017 deadline.

- Air Departure Tax (ADT) Consultation
- 16 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report concerning HITRANS draft response to the Scottish Government consultations on a 50% overall reduction of Air Departure Tax (ADT) and on an assessment of the likely significant environmental impacts from the overall 50% ADT reduction policy. HITRANS proposed response to the consultations was detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report

It was agreed to approve the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government Consultations on the Scottish Government's Policy for an overall 50% ADT reduction by the end of the current sessions of the Scottish Parliament and on an assessment of the likely significant environmental impacts from the overall 50% ADT reduction policy (Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report).

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

- SPARA 2020 Project Report
- 17 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, presented a Report providing an update on the Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports (SPARA 2020) project that had secured funding from the Northern Periphery and Artic INTERREG Programme with HITRANS as Lead Partner. The Report provided an overview of the project and summarised progress made. It was intimated in the Report that an agreement had been made between HITRANS and HIAL to enable the installation of fast chargers at airports in the HITRANS and NPA area to support the launch of electric car clubs.

The Report stated that, although good progress had been made across all work packages, a request would be made for a project extension in September to allow extra time to strengthen and enhance project outputs.

It was agreed to note the Report.

GA-PaTRA Green
Passenger
Transport in Rural
Areas

18 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, presented a Report providing an update on the successful application to Interreg VB North Sea Region Programme Priority 4: Promoting Green Transport and Mobility for the Project G-PaTRA that sought to deliver a number of Green Passenger Transport solutions in rural areas. It was intimated in the Report that the HITRANS element of the overall project amounted to €466,000 over the following three years. The Report provided background information and an overview of the project highlighting key objectives and project goals.

The Report further stated that the primary project over the next three years involved the deployment of an electric bus on local service within the Moray area of the Cairngorms National Park. HITRANS and project partner Moray Council had submitted a bid to the Scottish Government's Green Bus Fund and if successful this application would contribute £127,066 to support the purchase of an electric bus.

It was agreed to note the Report.

ERDF: Low Carbon
Travel and
Transport Update

19 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, presented a Report providing an update on the second round of ERDF: Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge funding. The Report stated that Transport Scotland's Low Carbon Travel and Transport (LCTT) Challenge Fund was providing up to £7.6 million of capital funding under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014-2020 Programme to facilitate the delivery of active travel and low carbon transport hubs. Timescales for the second round of Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge Fund were detailed in the Report.

The Report further stated that the following Feasibility Studies had been developed with the assistance of a pre-application feasibility grant:

- Inverness active travel and low carbon hub
- Lochaber active travel hub, focused on Fort William as main location
- Elgin active travel hub
- Opportunities for active travel hubs within CHORD towns, Argyle and Bute

It was agreed to note the Report.

PARTNERSHIP

Programme of Meetings

20 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report detailing proposed dates for the Partnership Board and Permanent Advisors meetings in 2018. The Report stated that the Partnership Board had approved, on a trial basis, that all meetings within The Highland Council Area would become single day meetings to allow Members to travel to the meeting and return within a single day and that a value for money assessment would be undertaken once the full pattern of 2017 meetings had been completed.

It was agreed:

- (1) a review of the revised approach to Inverness meetings would be reported to the Board in February for a final decision on meeting format going forward;
- (2) to note that additional meetings may be called if circumstances require the Board to meet; and
- (1) that the HITRANS Partnership and Advisors meet in 2018 on the following dates and locations:

Date	Partnership Meetings	Advisors meetings	Location
18 January 2018		Morning	Inverness
2 February 2018	Partnership Board Meeting only		Inverness
29 March 2018		Morning	Inverness
19 and 20 April 2018	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday Morning		Argyll and Bute
22 June 2018	Partnership Board Meeting only		Inverness
16 August 2018		morning	Inverness
13 and 14 September 2018	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday		Western Isles
1 November 2018		morning	Inverness
23 November 2018	Partnership Board Meeting only		Inverness

